

CCM - WHO IS CONVERTING WHOM?

Updated November 29, 2006 (first published February 20, 2002) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) –

Contemporary Christian Music is big business today, a half billion dollar a year industry. The CCM industry sold nearly 50 million albums in 2001, raking in more money than the jazz and classical segments of the music business. As of 1995, there were 250 radio stations that carried CCM as their primary music format. Revenues from sales of CCM have tripled since the mid-80s. One-quarter of the sales in Christian bookstores are from music. This caught the attention of the world, and most of the major CCM producers and distributors are now owned by secular corporations.

WORD ENTERTAINMENT, a secular corporation, is the home of such CCM heavy weights as 4Him, Phil Keaggy, Amy Grant, Mary Mary, Cindy Morgan, Erin O'Donnell, Point of Grace, Sandi Patty, Mark Schulz, Jaci Velasquez, Wes King, Nicole Mullen, and Anointed. (Word purchased MYRRH RECORDS some years back.) Word Entertainment also publishes *Veggie Tales* and *Veggie Tunes for children*. Word recently changed hands from one secular corporation to another. Warner Music Group paid Gaylord Hotels and the Grand Ole Opry \$84.1 million for Word. Warner, a division of AOL Time Warner, also owns Atlantic, Elektra, London-Sire, Reprise, and Warner Bros. Records, and has on its roster such vile secular rock artists as Green Day, Madonna, and Red Hot Chili Peppers.

INTEGRITY MUSIC, which owns Hosanna Music, Fairhope Records, and Vertical Music, and which had \$58.1 million in sales in 2000, has intimate partnerships with secular corporations such as Sony and Time Life. In March 2002, it signed a distribution agreement with Epic Records and Sony Music Entertainment. Under this new deal, Integrity will also distribute Sony "Christian music products." Epic and Sony publish and distribute some very immoral music groups, such as B2K, Tenacious D, Babyface, Bone thugs, Incubus, Michael Jackson, Rage Against the Machine. They also publish some of the vile old rock groups like Black Sabbath, Ozzy Osbourne, and Pearl Jam. In its 2000 financial statement, Integrity Music boasts of these partnerships and speaks of its work almost exclusively in business terms. Integrity controls more than 50% of the "praise and worship market" and co-publishes the popular *WOW worship* series and the *Songs 4 Worship* series. In January 2006, Sony Music announced that it was launching the first major music label "dedicated to nurturing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender artists" ("Sony Launches Gay Music Label," ABC News, Jan. 11, 2006). The label, called Music with a Twist, is a joint venture with Wilderness Media, a company led by Matt Farber, the founder of MTV's new homosexual channel LOGO.

In 1992, SPARROW RECORDS (Avalon, Ce Ce Winons, Carman, Delirious, Margaret Becker, Newsboys, Phillips Craig and Dean, Steve Green, Steven Curtis Chapman, Twila Paris, Zoe Girl) sold out to EMI Christian Music Group, which in turn is owned by the secular corporation, EMI Group. EMI owns 70 music companies (Virgin, Capitol, Mosaic, Narada, Astralwerks, etc.) representing some 1,500 artists, including a wide variety of very immoral secular music acts, such as Janet Jackson, Smashing Pumpkin, Mariah Carey, Geto Boys, Spice Girls, Blind Melon, and the Beastie Boys. EMI also owns the music of old groups such as Pink Floyd, Grand Funk Railroad, Radiohead, Iggy Pop, Sex Pistols, Badfinger, the Rolling Stones, David Bowie, Billy Idol, Blondie, and Poison.

The EMI Group also owns CHORDANT DISTRIBUTION GROUP (Big Tent Revival, Gaithers Gospel Quartet, Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir, Jennifer Knapp, John Michael Talbot, Mark Lowry, Susan Ashton, Supertones, The Ws) and FOREFRONT Records (Audio Adrenaline, dc talk, Rebecca St. James, Pax217, Extreme Days, Soundtrack, Geoff Moore) and EMI GOSPEL (Lamar Campbell, Beverly Crawford, T.D. Jakes, Sharon Riley, Tri City Singers) and STAR SONG RECORDS (Whiteheart, Bride, Don Francisco, Mylon LeFevre, Imperials, Gaither Vocal Band). Star Song, which was founded in 1977 and had a long list of recordings by the 1980s, was purchased by EMI in 1994 and was folded into Sparrow Records; by 1998, Star Song ceased to be an active record label.

In May 2002, EMI signed a letter of intent to acquire a twenty-five percent interest in GOTEE RECORDS, which represents Jennifer Knapp, Out of Eden, Relient K, the Katinas, John Reuben, and other CCM musicians. The CEO of Gotee is Toby McKeehan of dc Talk.

In 1995, the secular Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) purchased REUNION RECORDS (home of Kathy Troccoli, Michael W. Smith, Jake, Joy Williams, La Rue, Mat Brouwer, ShineMK, NewSong; former home to Rich Mullins, Billy Sprague, Kim Hill, Michael Omartian, Gary Chapman, Take 6, Morgan Cryar, Ashley Cleveland, Clay Crosse, and Third Day). BMG is the home for many immoral secular rock groups such as P. Diddy, Girl Thing, Alicia Keys, Run DMC, Santana, Foo Fighters, Jaguares, and O-Town. In 1996, BMG sold Reunion Records to another secular company, Provident Music Group, a subsidiary of British-based Zomba Music. Zomba owns such sensual acts as Britney Spears, 'N Sync, and the Backstreet Boys, and others whose names alone are too vile to mention.

BRENTWOOD MUSIC was purchased in 1994 by Zomba Music. Three years later, the secular-owned Brentwood purchased BENSON MUSIC and the aforementioned Reunion Records. The newly expanded corporation was called the Provident Music Group. Benson publishes the following CCM groups: 4HIM, NewSong, Forty Days, Celebrate Freedom, Whisper Loud, and Kyle Matthews. Brentwood publishes the Smoky Mountain

Series, the Hymnworks series, the America's 25 series, and the Acoustic Worship Series. Brentwood also has a children's division, featuring Kids Sing Praise, Mother Goose Gospel, Sing Me To Sleep, Daddy; Sing Me To Sleep, Mommy; Big Songs For Little Kids, and America's 25 Favorite Praise & Worship Choruses for Kids.

With over 50,000 copyrights, the secular-owned Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing has amassed the world's largest Christian music publishing catalog as well as the second largest "evangelically styled" choral music catalog. This same publishing group also publishes choral music, hymnals, and songbooks for churches. Thus, a large percentage of the money paid to license Christian music today goes into the coffers of a large secular corporation.

The secular Provident Music Group also owns DIADEM RECORDS, which features CCM artists Bob Carlisle, Bryan Duncan, and Helen Baylor.

In 1993, the Zomba-owned Provident Music Group purchased ESSENTIAL RECORDS. This is the home of CCM groups such as Jars of Clay, Caedmon's Call, and Third Day.

The secular-owned Provident Music Group also distributes Tommy Boy Gospel, Here To Him Music, Praise Hymn Soundtracks, New Haven Records, Spirit-Led & Fervent Records, Galilee of the Nations Music, and One Voice Music.

Zomba also owns VERITY RECORDS, which has become "the world's number one gospel label" featuring Donnie McClurkin, Fred Hammond, John P. Kee, Tonex, Virtue, Commissioned, Richard Smallwood and Hezekiah Walker.

Provident Music Group also owns CEDARMONT KIDS, the number one selling line of Christian children's recordings and videos with sales in excess of 12 million units.

We don't see much evidence that CCM is influencing the world, but there is considerable evidence that the world is influencing CCM.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17).

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